



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH PRESS RELEASE

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
201 W. Preston Street • Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Martin O'Malley, Governor – Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor – Joshua M. Sharfstein, M.D., Secretary

Office of Communications

*Dori Henry
Karen Black
410-767-6490*

Health Disparities Conference Highlights Maryland's Health Workforce *Del. Shirley Nathan-Pulliam Honored with Annual Lecture Series*

Hyattsville, MD (October 4, 2011)- *Maryland's Health Workforce: Promoting Diversity and Strengthening the Pipeline* was the theme for today's Eighth Annual Maryland Health Disparities Conference, sponsored by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH), Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities (MHHD). The conference was co-sponsored by the University of Maryland School of Public Health and the Hopkins Center for Health Disparities Solutions.

Participants focused on building capacity for future leaders in healthcare, educational partnerships to address student barriers, cultural competency and health literacy training, health information technology, and non-traditional pathways into the health professions to nurture the health professions pipeline.

"All Marylanders deserve the best possible care and the opportunity to improve their quality of life, which is why it is unacceptable that many health disparities persist among racial and ethnic communities in our State," said Lt. Governor Anthony G. Brown, who as Chair of the Maryland Health Quality and Cost Council is overseeing a workgroup created to address health disparities. "To address these disparities and ensure every community has access to high quality health care, we must improve diversity in the health care workforce and encourage more providers to work in underserved communities."

Dr. Carlessia A. Hussein, MHHD Director and Dr. Robert Gold, Dean of the University of Maryland School of Public Health kicked off the day-long event. Lieutenant Governor Brown, Dr. Joshua M. Sharfstein, DHMH Secretary, and Delegate Shirley Nathan-Pulliam provided comments.

At the conference, Dr. Stephen B. Thomas delivered the inaugural address of the Shirley Nathan-Pulliam Health Equity Lecture Series. This Lecture Series honors Del. Nathan-Pulliam for her career of leadership and legislative accomplishment in the elimination of health disparities. This Series is now a part of MHHD's annual health disparities conference.

This is the eighth consecutive year that the DHMH's Office of MHHD has hosted a statewide conference to enable health departments, other government agencies, legislators, health advocates and providers, the business and insurance industry as well as communities to come together and collaborate on ways to ensure health equity among all Maryland citizens.

For more information on the conference, visit the MHHD Website at www.dhmh.maryland.gov/hd

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